THE
# CATHOLIC RADICAL

*"...to foster a society based on creed instead of greed."* Peter Maurin

**June/July 2025** ***Price: For whatever it's worth.***

# Dear Pope Francis

*Editor's Note: In 2016, Loyola Press published the book* **Dear Francis: The Pope Answers Letters from Children around the World.** It *provides an intimate look at Francis' theology. Several of the children's letters and drawings along with Francis' replies are reprinted here.*

Dear Pope Francis,
What makes you happy in your work as pope?

**Judith, Age 9, Belgium**

Dear Judith,
It makes me happy to be with people. That is what makes me happy. If I cannot be with people, I spend time with Jesus and talk to him about people. I can't imagine myself alone.

Judith, I like your drawing. I think of myself as you have drawn me: hand in hand with you and your friends. Being together with others brings me joy. And as the pope, I think I ought to be with people.

Franciscus

Your Holiness,
Will my grandpa, a non-Catholic who is not a person willing to do something evil, go to heaven when he dies? In other words, if someone never makes any penances, how big a sin must he commit for him to go down to hell?

God bless you,

**Ivan, Age 13, China**

Dear Ivan,
Jesus loves us so very much, and he wants us all to go to heaven. God's will is that everyone would be saved. Jesus walks with us until the very last moment of our lives, so that we can be with him always. Now appearances can certainly deceive us. For example, some people think that because you don't follow every Church rule to the letter, you will automatically go to hell. But in fact, Jesus is beside us throughout our lives—to the very last moment!—to save us.

Once, a woman went to a holy priest whose name was John Maria Vianney.

**(Continued on Page 2)**

# Stopping the Cycle of Revenge

**by Scott Schaeffer-Duffy**

Before sunrise on March 23, an ambulance, staffed by three Palestinians, was dispatched from Gaza's southernmost city Rafah to help evacuate civilians after an Israeli attack. The marked vehicle, with emergency lights flashing, slowed to a stop when the driver saw Israeli soldiers blocking the road. A uniformed paramedic, Ezzedine Shaath and his driver, Mostafa Khafaja, got out of the ambulance with hands raised to determine whether they could continue along. Without warning, the Israelis shot and killed both of them. A third worker, Munther Abed, a 27-year-old volunteer paramedic since 2015, sitting in the back seat, sure he was about to die, began praying. Soldiers opened his door, ordered him to get out, strip naked, and kneel down. Abed was handcuffed, hit with rifle butts, spat on, and asked where he was on October 7, 2023 when Palestinian militants killed about 1,000 Israelis. One soldier shouted, "You are a terrorist. Why are you here?" Shortly thereafter, Abed was joined by Dr. Saeed al-Bardawil and his son who had been detained while on their way to go fishing. The three of them remained kneeling on the side of the road when two more Palestinian ambulances and a fire truck, with emergency lights blazing, pulled up to determine why there had been no communication with the first ambulance. A UN vehicle also pulled over. When two uniformed

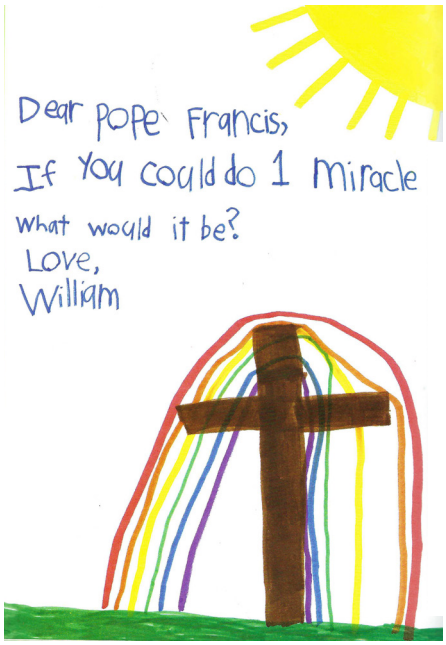
**(Continued on Page 4)**

# Dear Pope

(Continued from Page 1)

He was pastor of the parish in Ars, in France. The woman began to cry, because her husband had committed suicide by jumping off a bridge. She was desperate because she thought that her husband had certainly ended up in hell. But Father John Maria, who was a saint, said to her, "Look between the bridge and the river, there is the mercy of God."

Franciscus




**William, Age 7, United States**

Dear William,
I would heal children. I've never been able to understand why children suffer. It's a mystery to me. I don't have an explanation. I ask myself about this, and I pray about your question. Why do children suffer? My heart asks the question. Jesus wept, and by weeping, he understood our tragedies. I try to understand too. Yes, if I could perform a miracle, I would heal every child.

Your drawing makes me think: there is a big , dark cross, and a rainbow and the sunshine behind it. I like that. My answer to the pain of children is silence, or perhaps a word that rises from my tears. I'm not afraid to cry. You shouldn't be either.

Franciscus

**Michael, Age 9, Nigeria**

Dear Michael,
We have to help people of good will speak about war as something bad. The reason people wage war is selfishness and greed. I can't resolve all the conflicts in the world, but you and I can try to make the earth a better place. People suffer, and even your drawing captures a sense of sadness. I can see that you know about conflict. But there is no magic wand. We have to convince everyone that the best way to win a war is not to wage one. I know that's not easy. But I am going to try, And I ask you to try too.

Franciscus

Dear Pope Francis,
You are not young anymore, and you have already done many things. What more do you want to do in your life to make the world more beautiful and fair?

**Hannes and Lidewij**
**Age 9, twins from the Netherlands**

Dear Hannes and Lidewij,
There are so many things I would like to do. I would like to smile always—smile at God first of all to thank him for all the good he does for people. I would like to thank God for his patience. Have you ever thought about how much patience God has? God is very patient. God waits and waits for us.

I want to help people who suffer. I would like to make sure that there are no more injustices or at least that there are not so many of them. I want to help children get to know Jesus. I wish there were no longer slaves in this world. There are still many slaves in this world—so many. I desire to do all this, but I am old and I have very little thread left in the spoon so...God will tell...

Franciscus

Pope Francis (1936-2025) R.I.P.

**Vol. 41, No. 6** **THE CATHOLIC RADICAL** **June/July 2025**

Published every two months by:

**The Saints Francis & Thérèse Catholic Worker Community**
52 Mason Street, Worcester, MA 01610
Telephone: (508) 753-3588, Email:theresecw2@gmail.com

*Founded in 1933 by Dorothy Day and Peter Maurin, the Catholic Worker is a lay movement serving the poor, denouncing injustice, and proclaiming peace. We are not tax exempt. We rely on the generosity of our supporters to meet our expenses. We welcome volunteers, letters, poetry, articles, artwork, and donations. Back issues of* The Catholic Radical *are available at: http://archive.org/details/catholicradical/*

# Eureka Street

**by Claire Schaeffer-Duffy**

Massachusetts is enduring a wave of immigration raids. Vengeful, politically motivated, and often warrantless, they have little to do with getting foreign-born criminals off our streets. After Tom Homan, Trump's border czar and a Catholic, promised to "bring hell" to Boston because its police department allegedly refused to cooperate with ICE, agents from an array of federal operations, including the Diplomatic Security Services, arrested 370 people in the city and surrounding towns. In Milford, ICE had already been apprehending large numbers of immigrant parishioners at Saint Mary of the Assumption.

Most of us here know the chilling details of the abduction of Rumeysa Ozturk, a doctoral student at Tufts University. A year ago, she co-authored an op-ed for a student newspaper calling on the university to divest from Israel. Widely viewed video footage of her kidnapping on March 25th show six immigration agents, some masked, encircling her as she walks down a street in Somerville. They take her phone and backpack, handcuff her, and whisk her into a SUV with tinted windows.

Shortly after Trump was elected, LUCE, a Massachusetts immigrant justice coalition, began training volunteers to serve as ICE monitors. The coalition set up a statewide hotline people can call if they observe, or experience, an immigration arrest. Those calls activate a network of ICE verifiers who go to the reported locale to determine if ICE is actually involved and whether the due process rights of the detained are observed. LUCE, whose acronym means "light" in various languages, says their goal is to "illuminate" ICE's actions so they "cannot operate in the dark."

I am a trained ICE verifier which is why on the morning of May 8th, I began receiving text alerts about Eureka Street where an immigation apprehension was unfolding. On one side of the road stood half a dozen or more volunteer ICE watchers; on the other side, five armed male agents encircled 40-year old Rosane Ferreira-De Oliveira, her teen daughter, and 21-year old daughter Augusta Clara who was clutching her infant. Everyone was waitng for the lawyer to arrive.

Only later did I learn the details of this Brazilian family's predicament, how immigration authorities had arrested Augusta Clara's partner, the father of her child, the day before then informed Augusta the following morning she needed to sign immigration papers on his

behalf. When she and her teen sister went to comply, ICE agents pulled them over to arrest Augusta. Call your mother to come get the baby, they said. As soon as Rosane arrived she discovered she was ICE's actual "target."

The monitors on Eureka Street began telephoning everyone on their contact list. "Come down here," they said. "ICE is trying to arrest a mother." Soon twenty people or more had gathered including media and a few elected officials. Many of the assembled were mothers and grandmothers. The sight of armed men — two young enough to be our sons — surrounding three unarmed women and an infant struck a biological chord.

Throughout the morning, the agents had refused to show a warrant or say whether Rosane was under arrest or not. Impatient with the stand-off, several of the women observers boldly declared they were taking the Brazilians to find a bathroom. "You don't have a warrant," they said, "and this young mother needs to change the baby's diaper and use the bathroom." With the Brazilians in their protective embrace, the women marched up the sidewalk away from the immigration agents. As a parting shot, one young mother turned around, raised her arms high, and flipped the men the bird. "Welcome to Worcester," she shouted.

That's when all hell broke loose, much of it recorded on video footage that has gone viral. Flummoxed at the women's intervention, the agents abandoned their plan to wait for the lawyer and tried to nab Rosane. Worcester City Councilor Etel Haxhiaj, petite mother of two and defender of the underdog, defiantly planted herself between the grandmother and an agent, prompting several of us to huddle around Rosane in protective shield. Ashley and I loudly recited the Rosary.

But the men were physically stronger. Two grabbed Rosane by the arms and shoved her into a nearby vehicle. Frantic to keep her mother, the teenage daughter threw herself across the car's hood, as did Ashley, while many of us blocked the road, chanting, "Don't take the mother."

In October 1854, a riotous band of Worcesterites, mostly men, chased federal agent Asa Butman out of the city when he came to implement the heinous Fugitive Slave Act. They prevented the deportation of Black residents to enslavement in the South. We can boast no such success on Eureka Street. Much to the fury of the community, the 35 police officers who arrived on the scene abetted the federal agents, clearing the road so the vehicle bearing Rosane could drive away. She remains in detention. While the police dropped charges that never should have been levied against her teen daughter, Ashley faces legal consequences for her her protective efforts. And Worcester, like so many cities across the country, remains in turmoil over how to handle the menace of cruel immigration policies.

For all the anguish, Eureka Street has also emboldened many in the city to defend our immigrant neighbors. Ω

# Cycle of Revenge

**(Continued from Page 1)**

Palestinian medics got out to examine the damaged ambulance, Israelis opened fire, killing them and eleven others inside the vehicles. The sole survivor recorded the massacre with his cell phone. He can be heard saying, "Forgive me, mother. This is the path I chose—to help people. God is great." Moments after he put the phone in his pocket, he too was shot and killed.

Afterwards, a soldier approached Abed

*Jewish Voice for Peace*

and said, " Your colleagues, all are gone!" Abed replied, "May God have mercy on their souls." Another soldier said, "God has taken those terrorists to hell." Abed then saw the Israelis use a tank to crush the vehicles and push them and the bodies into a ditch where they all were buried.

When no word about the rescue workers arrived, the Red Crescent Society and United Nations asked permission from the Israelis to investigate, a request that was denied for five days. Once they found the mass grave, they demanded an explanation only to hear Lt. Col. Nadav Shoshani say the Israeli attack was a deliberate response to vehicles without headlights or emergency signals "advancing suspiciously."

When evidence exposed this lie, Israelis said, without proof, that at least six of those killed were armed Hamas operatives. A thorough investigation was promised, but, in 573 previous Israeli inquiries into Israeli war crimes in Gaza, only one led to criminal charges.

Unfortunately, the murder of unarmed Palestinians is common. On December 16, 2023, Nahida Khalil Anton and her daughter Samar Kamal Anton were shot and killed by Israeli snipers inside the grounds of Gaza's Holy Family Church. On January 29, 2025, Israelis killed six members of five-year-old Hind Rajab's family, two paramedics sent to rescue her, and then killed Hind. On April 10, 2025, UN rights office said every one of the victims of 36 Israeli air strikes, between March 18 and April 9, were women and children. On April 12, in the West Bank village of Turmus Ayya, Israeli soldiers killed Amer Rabee, a 14-year-old American boy, while he was picking almonds with two friends, who were also killed. The next day, Palm Sunday, Israel targeted al-Ahli Hospital, Gaza's last functional medical center, with three missiles killing 500 Palestinians. When considered with the Israeli killing of over 53,000 other Palestinians since October 7, 2023 and the Israeli blockade of food, water, and medicine, one has to wonder how can the responsible Israelis be so merciless?

History gives us clues. After decades of oppression in England, Puritans settled in New England, a place a professor of religious studies, Conrad Cherry, called "God's New Israel." Like the Jewish people, whose experience of slavery in Egypt motivated them to slaughter the Philistines, Amorites, and Moabites in order to occupy Palestine, the Puritans, armed with awareness of their suffering and belief that God had given them a new home, oppressed, displaced, and killed those who were not part of God's chosen people. Indigenous people, Quakers, Catholics, Jews, and enslaved children, women, and men suffered the consequences.

Many Jewish survivors of the Holocaust, armed with keen awareness of their victimhood and the biblical promise of land occupied for almost 2,000 years predominantly by non-Jews, hold their heads up high while ethnically cleansing Palestinians. It makes no difference that the Philistines didn't enslave the Jews in Egypt, Indigenous Americans didn't victimize the Puritans in England, and Palestinians didn't perpetrate the Holocaust. Anyone portrayed as standing in the way of a victimized people, faces the same end—genocide.

The belief that a loving God created each of us as members of one human family comes into question when faced with such cruelty as the massacre of ambulance drivers in Gaza. Some would conclude that the perpetrators are evil, morally different from us, a contention that, in turn, justifies unbridled vengeance. But instead of stopping mass murder, such ideas only change the names of the victims and plant seeds of retaliation.

Israeli crimes against Palestinians are indeed evil, but the Israeli perpetrators are still our brothers and sisters, albeit very wayward ones. To break the cycle of slaughter, a new society needs to be constructed which shows no favorites. Only a political system where Muslims, Christians, and Jews enjoy equal rights can enjoy lasting peace. No matter how extreme the Israeli government and its armed forces become, we must not let that turn hearts into stone and deny the right of Jewish people to live in peace and security in their ancestral homeland.

I have no illusion that co-existence would be easy. As more and more Palestinians are terrorized, tortured, starved, or killed daily, the prospect of reconciliation shrinks. But Black South African victims of apartheid show it can be done. Many Israelis will need to be prosecuted and reparations paid, while the Palestinian nightmare which began over 75 years ago, must be meticulously documented by a truth commission and then preserved in museums, memorials, anniversaries, and school curriculums. If the accounting is full, fair, and centered on reconciliation, the cycle of violence in the Holy Land might be stopped. Security for all will come when Jews, Muslims, and Christians say with one voice, "Never Again to Anyone!" Ω

**"Revenge and retaliation always perpetuate the cycle of anger, fear, and violence." —Coretta Scott King**

# Mother's Day Letter to Pope Leo

Your Holiness,

Peace! Congratulations on being named pope and for taking the name of the pontiff who wrote *Rerum Novarum*, a blessing for unionized workers.

As members of the Catholic Worker movement we are inspired by Dorothy Day to offer shelter to the un-housed and to promote peace through education and nonviolent action. Among other things, this has led us to go to various war zones—Nicaragua, Bosnia, Darfur, Iraq, Afghanistan, Haiti, Burundi, and Israel/Palestine. In each place, we tried to offer material assistance, to promote peace, and, once we return to the States, to inform people about what we witnessed. In our seven trips to the Israeli occupied territories, we saw grotesque Israeli cruelty toward Palestinians. House demolitions, beatings, arrests without charges, and killings were woefully common.

And now, as more than 53,000 Palestinians lie dead from US-supplied arms and two million more are threatened with starvation from an Israeli blockade, we beg you to consider going on a peace mission to Gaza.

Years ago, a Jesuit at Scott's alma mater, Holy Cross College, preached: "Do good and avoid evil." We're sure you would agree that helping to lift Israel's humanitarian blockade on Gaza is doing good. At the same time, calling for an end to the US delivery of arms used to kill civilians, not only in Gaza, but also in the West Bank, Lebanon, and Syria, represents, for us as Americans, avoiding preventable evil.

While a human rights observer in Gaza, Scott asked a member of the Israeli parliament, "What would bring peace to the Holy Land?" The Israeli replied, "If the US Congress had hearings on cutting military aid to Israel, we'd have peace at noon the next day."

On this Mother's Day, when so many Palestinian mothers are facing the intolerable cross of helplessly watching their children die, and so much of the world is doing almost nothing to save them, we beseech you to go to Gaza, see the suffering in person, and then appeal, as only you can, for mercy, peace, and justice.

Yours in Christ,

Scott and Claire Schaeffer-Duffy

# State of the Air

The American Lung Association's 2025 State of the Air Report concluded that "156 million people lived in places heavy in smog or soot pollution that harms their lungs, hearts, and brains," and that "People of color are about twice as likely to live somewhere with high soot and ozone pollution as white Americans." The spokesperson for the report, Dr. Neely Tummula, warned, "Any rollback of environmental regulations has the potential to have really widespread public health impacts."

Nonetheless, the Trump administration cut funding to the EPA and curtailed prosecution of air polluters. In context, the administration's failure to support cleaner air is a dangerous and racist failure to protect lives.

We must keep in mind that, since the Clean Air Act first passed under President Nixon, air pollution dropped nearly 80% across the country. Dr. Tummula reminds us that "Cleaner air keeps 2.4 million asthma attacks from happening every year." Ω

# Kids Say the Darnedest Things

Eight-year-old Frances told Claire that when she was three was "the happiest time of my life" and that she "missed being young."

Five year-old Isaiah said, "Mom, did you know that in the 80's they used acorns for money?"

When her mom asked three-year-old Aya if she had to go to the bathroom, she said, "I don't pee any more."

When eight-year-old Theo said next week was school vacation, Scott teased him by saying, "Great. You'll have time to come over to clean our windows and rake our yard." He replied, 'No, grandpa, I have to use my vacation wisely." Ω

# Dystopian Novel

**by Caroline Howe**

It was like heaven.
A forested writer's retreat
for first-time novelists.
Weather perfect.
My little cabin filled
with the muses of all those
published authors
who once stayed here.

I was living a dream.
That is, until the group critique.
This couldn't happen in real life,
someone said.
But it's a dystopian novel, I said.
It's about a "what if" future.
Too bizarre, the teacher said.
Try situating the craziness
in a kernel of the possible,
where the dystopian future
answers a real problem in society.
Like in A Handmaid's Tale.

Maybe they were right.
Could a strong democracy
be destroyed in a few months
by the declarations
of a self-proclaimed king
and unelected oligarchs?
Where decrees supersede law,
fact-checking is treasonous,
and historical truth blasphemy?
Concentration camps for immigrants;
prison for women who miscarry;
liberty and justice for wealthy white
men.
The workshop concluded:
Your dystopian future is too chaotic,
without grounding.

But I pressed on,
trusted my dream,
and eventually,
my novel came to light.
It's been a nightmare. Ω

*Editor's Note: The author is a retired Holy Cross College professor and a member of the Worcester County Poetry Association.*

# Everybody

**by Patrick Moriarty**

Everybody should be homeless for a week.
Everybody should spend a weekend in the ER.
Everybody should know what it's like to have no money in their pocket.
Everybody should have a tattoo.
Everybody needs to know hunger.
Everybody needs to know pain.
Everybody should wake up to their village in rubble, hold their dead child after shell fire.
Everybody should get stuck on a plane.
Everybody should sit hours in traffic.
Everybody should dance naked in rain.
Everybody should carry a casket.
Everybody should get kicked out of school.
Everybody should score a touchdown.
Everybody should fumble the ball.
Everybody should gamble and lose it all.
Everybody needs a shower. Everybody should go a week without one.
Everybody should have a toothache.
Everybody should have a stroke or heart attack, a migraine, ingrown toenail, or finger caught in a door.
Everybody should lose their hair.
Everybody should lose their teeth, or eyesight, or ability to walk.
Everybody should be obese or anorexic. Everybody should have to take a bus to work.
Everyone should know military service.
Every officer should see combat.
Everybody should lose everything from a natural disaster.
Everybody should have a job they hate.
Everybody should know what it's like not to get a job to hate.
Everybody should buy groceries with food stamps or WIC card, shop for clothes at the thrift shop, spend time in a nursing home, shelter, or jail.
Everybody should push a shopping cart filled with bags of cans.
Everyone should be bullied, cancelled, despised for their race or creed, their gender or gender choice, their sex or sexuality.
Everyone should know sexual or physical abuse, verbal abuse, chastisement.
Everybody should live alone.
Everybody should take joy and bless the sunrise, take solace in the beauty of sunset.

**Walk a mile in someone else's shoes**

## Letters

Dear Scott & Claire,

I am staying put in my bed on a cold morning looking out at a nice view of lawn and trees, so grateful I have lived to experience my 81st favorite month of May.

I am also saddened by the cruelty and ignorance of the new administration in Washington.

On a positive note, I am pleased with the choice of the new Holy Father Leo XIV. When his name was announced from the balcony in Latin, I thought of Leo XIII and *Rerum Novarum*. The new pope's face shows deep compassion and concern. Having an American-born pope with feet in North and South America and Creole blood only adds to the joy.

**Phil Brewer**
**Rutland Massachusetts**

Dear Scott and Claire,
Warm greetings and peace to you!

Wishing you so many graces during this Lenten season. May we continue to stand tall in our nonviolent truths as Trump and his cronies wreak havoc upon this world.

**Nancy Small**
**Worcester, Massachusetts**

Hi there,
I just read your latest. Oh my gosh. How beautiful was Charlie Chaplin's concluding speech? You are so right about it ringing true still. It is so moving and so uplifting.

Conversely, the article about Kent Barefield was so disturbing. Unbelievable how many chances there were for people to act humanely and yet person after person went with the status quo of a woefully inhumane culture and workplace.

The continued atrocities against Palestinians weighs heavily on this weary planet. When will humans learn? If only we could all be inspired by the Charlie Chaplins and Dorothy Days of this world.

Very disturbing times at the moment... all around the world. It must be quite worrying for you with a madman in control of the country. We have our own madman making scary changes for us here in Aotearoa [New Zealand], but he's tame compared to Trump.

This week I met a Sri Lankan born woman who grew up in the US. When she heard my ancestral roots are from the US she tentatively asked me how that feels. I must've given the answer she was hoping for because she then cried as she expressed her fears for her family still living in the US.

[My husband] Waata and I have been using a Permaculture mantra over the past year to inject positivity into our little lives. "The Problem Is The Solution." We have been amazed at how it can turn our attitudes around. Having said that, I am a bit dumbfounded as to how to create the solutions for some of these larger global problems or, for that matter, some inter personal fractured relationships closer to home. However, I know it is through looking to find solutions that problems are eventually overcome. May we all find ways to find solutions.

May God bless you in your efforts to shine a bright light in an increasingly darkening world. May you catch glimmers of other bright lights to refresh and strengthen you to keep going.

**Sheri Ellery Waata**
**Aotearoa [New Zealand]**

What the ? Why the ?
When the ? Who the ?

**Brian Earls**
**Worcester, Massachusetts**

*Editor's Note: A good time for questions.*

Dear Scott and Claire,
I thought after reading the last newsletter that what Peter Maurin called "The Big Idea" might be in order in that **all** political arrangements are rising and falling in the dominion of the Evil One, so Trumpism is a bit player, while discipleship is a witness to victory won.

**Peter King**
**Unity Kitchen Catholic Worker**
**Syracuse, New York**

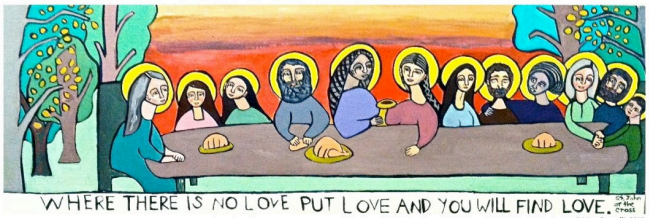
Dear Scott
I loved your article/essay "Fathoming Evil." It was one of the best I've read in a long time. Keep up the good work.

**David Vilandre**
**West Boylston, Massachusetts**

I always enjoy your thoughtful newsletters. Wish we heard more of your articles (or message) from the pulpit.

**Maribeth Eugene**
**Lancaster, Massachusetts**

## Catholic Worker Calendar

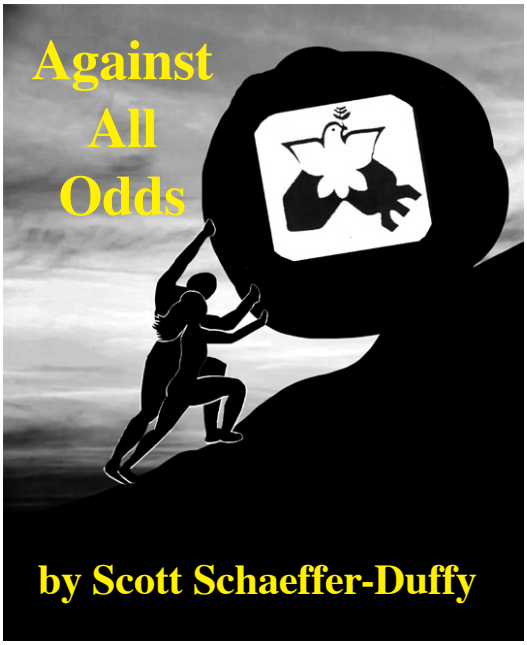



*Kristen Brunelli*

**June 11 & 25, July 9 & 23 - Evening Prayer**: Please join us for short silent meditation followed by Evening Prayer with Taizé chant at 52 Mason Street. 7:00 PM. Refreshments to follow.

**Late July- Release of Scott Schaeffer-Duffy's New Book**

We are now accepting orders for **Against All Odds**, the history of a remarkable campaign against a well-funded nuclear weapons manufacturer. Nobel Peace Prize nominee Kathy Kelly says, "Longing for uplift and renewed energy? I highly recommend this book." Peace activist and author Frida Berrigan says, "**Against All Odds** ... reminds us to keep doing the hard work of peace making, keep finding the joy and delight in resistance and be hope for one another. I found it oddly wonderful!" To reserve a copy: send a check for twenty-five dollars.



# Mason Street Musings

While spell checking this newsletter for the past hour, I received two phone calls from people looking for shelter. When I told a man that all our beds are full, he exclaimed, "That's what they say everywhere." A woman, looking for shelter for herself and her partner, was equally disappointed, and yet was thoughtful enough to tell me how glad she was that I recovered from being hit by a car five years ago.

Today's *New York Times* reported on its front page that President Trump is reaping millions, if not billions, in personal wealth while Americans like those who called me have nowhere to lay their heads. Never before have we seen more heartless decisions coming from a presidential administration. The demands for works of mercy and works for justice and peace have never been so urgent.

Unfortunately, our income is not keeping pace with our expenses. We are cutting back where we can, but still need almost $2,000 every time we publish this newsletter. At this writing, we are about $2,000 in debt and emptying our change jar for daily expenses.

Three years ago, we received an enormous donation from a long-time reader's will. Since we had benefited often from windfalls at other Catholic Worker houses, we decided to give away half of what we received. Frankly, every Catholic Worker house I contacted was in need. To my surprise though, one community turned down our offer of help because they did not want to jeopardize God's gift to them of voluntary poverty. While we have never suffered anything close to the daily privation of starving folks in Gaza and Darfur, we can testify that voluntarily living close to the edge teaches us to treasure every donor. So, if you can send us some help, we would appreciate it. If you are also in need, don't give us a second thought. God has kept us going for almost 40 years and isn't about to forget us now.

On the brighter side, one of our long-term guests moved into his own apartment and another is heading in the same direction. While too many of our guests go in and out of need for decades, once in a while, some get settled for good.

Also, our garden, more truthfully Claire's garden, is springing to life. The strawberry plants look eager and the garlic, Claire planted in the fall, looks grand too. I picked up seed potatoes yesterday from a group calling itself the Tuber Tourney which is holding a contest to award the grower of the biggest potato. Although we live in New England's second largest city, it's wonderful to look out my window and see Claire's contribution to Peter Maurin's green revolution.

Lastly, while on an early morning run, I needed to cross Main Street. To my right I could see there were no cars for a mile, but my view to my left was blocked by a huge truck. The driver stopped and waved me on so I started crossing the street. As I neared the middle of the road, the trucker beeped frantically, and I halted inches away from a vehicle that was speeding around the truck. Ironically, the car that nearly killed me was a hearse. Talk about one stop shopping!

In any event, like the woman who called just now, I too am glad I was, once again, not killed by a car. May all of you in any hour of need be so blessed by God's grace. Blessed summer! Ω

**Scott**

**SS. Francis & Thérèse Catholic Worker**
**52 Mason Street**
**Worcester, MA, USA 01610**
**(508) 753-3588 & (508) 753-3089**

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# Liberation Violence Is a Dead End

**by Scott Schaeffer-Duffy**

In Prague on May 27, 1944, Czech and Slovak partisans ambushed Reinhard Heyrich, a notorious SS officer and father of four children. Hitler was later photographed standing beside Heyrich's youngest son at the father's funeral. In retaliation for the assassination, the Nazis razed the villages of Lidice and Ležáky. Men and boys age 14 and above were shot and most of the women and children were deported and murdered in Nazi concentration camps.

Just warriors would justify Heyrich's assassination, but Catholic Workers, who honor the sixth commandment "T**hou shall not kill**" and Jesus' commandment "**Love one another, as I have loved you**" do not. We will not condone the killing of anyone for any reason whatsoever. We also note that all too often, when the oppressed resort to violence, it backfires, leading to many more innocent victims.

On May 21, 2025 outside The Capitol Jewish Museum, in Washington, DC, Elias Rodriguez murdered two Israeli Embassy staffers, Yaron Lischinsky and Sarah Milgrim. Rodriguez waited at the scene of the crime and told police, "I did it for Palestine."

While some would note that the Israeli Embassy lobbied for the many billions of dollars in US military aid which were used to kill more than 53,000 Palestinians as justification for Lischinsky and Milgrim's assassination, Catholic Workers strongly disagree. To us, the murders are not only religiously repugnant, but counterproductive. Press accounts all mention that the victims were engaged to be married.

US Representative Jake Auchincloss (D-Massachusetts), who is Jewish, said, "This heinous double murder demonstrates the depths to which hatred of Jews is descending in the anti-Israel mob. "

Rather than saving Palestinian lives, Rodriguez provided powerful ammunition to those who would massacre every Palestinian in Gaza and the West Bank. It makes no difference that Palestinians have been victimized by Israel for 75 years and that nonviolent means have not slowed that violence. One need only recall how the October 7, 2023 Palestinian killing of a thousand Israelis has become the justification for the killing of more than fifty times as many Palestinians to realize how incendiary violence is.

Rodrigues' shooting of Lischinsky and Milgrim immediately began being used to tar all opponents of the genocide of Palestinians by Israel. The image of the murdered young lovers, like the images of Heyrich's orphans, obliterates empathy and assures fierce retaliation.

It makes no difference, 83 years later, that Heyrich's assassination is either justified or forgotten in the context of overwhelming Nazi injustice and brutality. In the short run, long-suffering people, who embrace violence to speed their liberation, usually instigate the exact opposite.

But if we want to see fewer assassinations and fewer suicide bombings, we must redouble international efforts to end Israel's genocide nonviolently. The world needs to promote peace with justice as it did in the facc of apartheid with a campaign on Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions. Zionists oppose BDS, not because it is anti-Semitic, but because it is an effective means to reverse the racist establishment of a Jewish state in a predominantly non-Jewish country. Lasting peace can only come from a new Israeli/ Palestinian state which respects all its residents equally, regardless of race, religion, or creed. Ω

*Editor's Note: For more information, please go to the website for the coalition of Palestinian organizations which support the BDS movement: https://bdsmovement.net.*

*Nobel Peace Laureate and South African Archbishop Desmond Tutu said of BDS: "It is a Palestinian-led, international non-violent movement that seeks to force the Israeli government to comply with international law in respect to its treatment of the Palestinian people. I have supported this movement because it exerts pressure without violence on the State of Israel to create lasting peace for the citizens of Israel and Palestine, peace which most citizens crave. I have witnessed the systematic violence against and humiliation of Palestinian men, women, and children by members of the Israeli security forces. Their humiliation and pain is all too familiar to us South Africans."*